



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board**

**May 6, 2015 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board:**

**:Present:**

Jeffrey Powers, Don Gardner, Ken Palmer, Ken Newman , W.P. Johnson, Pete Fellers, Pam Willoughby, Chuck Grove

**:Absent:** Ronnie Gross, Keith Tuck, Spencer Tinsley, Matt Baumgardner

**Staff Present:** Scott Baker, Jerry Craig, Jessica Hupp

**Staff Absent:** Traci Blido, Carl Boggess

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**(1) Approval of Agenda**

Jeff Powers called the meeting to order and asked for a review of the May 6, 2015 agenda.

A motion and a second were made to approve the May 6, 2015 agenda, as presented.

**Adopted Unanimously.**

**(2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2015**

Mr. Powers asked for a review of the April 1, 2015 meeting minutes.

Mr. Baer stated under 8 should read Karen Baum.

A motion and a second were made to approve the meeting minutes of April 1, 2015, as amended.

**Adopted unanimously.**

**(3) County Administrator's Report**

Mr. Powers stated that Mr. Boggess would be acting as the Interim County Administrator and would make a point to come to the June meeting.

**(4) Economic Development Director's Report**

Ms. Hupp reported that the Governor's office announced May as Business Appreciation month for the state. The Office of Economic Development plans to place an ad in the Bedford Bulletin to thank local businesses and will also host a Business Appreciation event on Tuesday, May 26 at Benjamin's in Forest. Anyone on the board is encouraged to attend.

Ms. Hupp stated staff is proud to announce that Cintas plans to expand their operations here in Bedford by investing \$6 million in its existing facility and add up to 15 new employees.

Ms. Hupp reported that Bedford County has been getting a lot of attention recently from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), who visited twice this month, and brought their new COO to tour the county's existing properties. Trident's facility was one of the buildings they were able to tour, and we hope they will help us market it to other food manufacturing businesses.

Ms. Hupp stated that she brought the press release that was written for the county fair and will pass it around for the board's review.

#### **(5) Cooperative Extension Report**

Mr. Baker reported that there are two Ag Business Roundtables with Congressman Hurt coming up on May 8. The first will be held at the Colonial Restaurant in Rustburg from 8 – 9 a.m. and another from 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. in Chatham at the Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex.

Mr. Baker reminded the board that he brought a Jefferson Forest student to a meeting several months ago and she will be with the extension office another week or two if anyone wants to show her around their farm.

Mr. Baker reported that the Region 2000 Ag Strategic Plan is looking at a feasibility study for a food aggregation facility. The Department of Housing and Community Development awarded Region 2000 with a grant to carry out this feasibility study. They are currently looking for participants who represent producers and the school system to give feedback.

Mr. Baker reported that last Saturday was the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Central Virginia Livestock Show and Sale. There were a good number of kids, including 14 from Bedford County. Mr. Baker reported that Bedford took home the grand champion market lamb, grand champion ewe, champion beef showmanship, champion supreme heifer, grand champion hog, junior and senior swine showmanship, and grand champion sheep showmanship. Mr. Baker reminded the board that the show wouldn't be possible without all the support of local businesses and organizations such as Farm Bureau, the Ruritan clubs, Young Farmers, Lynchburg Livestock Market and more.

Mr. Grove asked how many counties participate in this event and if they give money in support of the event. Mr. Baker said that no county that participates gives money to the show. Mr. Grove stated we should ask our Board of Supervisors to donate and be a challenge to other counties to put up some money to make these events continue.

Mr. Grove made a motion to ask the Board of Supervisors to support the Central Virginia Livestock show in the donation amount of \$2,500. After discussion, the board amended the motion to table this request for further discussion at the August meeting.

**(6) Tourism Director's Report**

Mr. Craig reported he met again with the equine group for their second meeting. They brought many ideas for naming their group and put together a mission statement in same meeting. Mr. Craig said they are very focused and want to be major component of agritourism. Another meeting has been scheduled toward the end of the month, on May 19. At that point they will be ready to lead a discussion on what they want to do at the County Fair.

**(7) Bedford County Farm Bureau Young Farmers Report**

Mr. Johnson reported there will be a seed rep coming from TA Seeds tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. to talk about corn, soy beans, alfalfa, and grass seeds. Mr. Johnson said they are currently planning the Membership Welcome and Appreciation Day for July which all will be invited to.

**(8) Committee Reports**

**a. Education & Events**

**(1) Ag Complex**

Mr. Palmer said no new news on the ag complex.

**(2) Upcoming events**

**- County ag fair**

Mr. Powers stated he took a cross-section of what was presented to the Board of Supervisors and created an outline for the Ag Board. Mr. Powers stated a big motivation for picking the August dates had to do with the fact that nothing else in the area was going on that weekend.

Mr. Powers explained the fair times and tentative schedules. The fair committee has decided Friday will be an equine day and Mr. Palmer will act as lead on equine events. Saturday will mostly be kids showing livestock and other ag type contests, which Susan Epperly volunteered to help run, along with any additional ag contests and events. Dr. Gardner asked what type of other ag events and contests would be held. Mr. Powers explained it will be the standard fair contests such as best jellies, jams, pies, and whatever else people would like to see. Dr. Gardner asked where the parking would be, to which Mr. Powers stated there are 12 acres behind the doctor's office where people have parked in the past for the wine festival and an additional nine acres on the other side of Curry's store.

The fair will have free gate entry and free parking. There will be vendor fees of \$150 and forms for vendors will be out by next week. Since it is a county fair, the contract states that we will gain proceeds back from the rides after a certain amount of money has been made. Each

committee member has arranged their stakeholders who plan to volunteer. Mr. Craig will be in charge of the wine garden.

Mr. Powers stated he received a verbal agreement with a local T.V. station that they will be a sponsor for the fair, which will help draw people from outside the county, as well as the lake crowd.

Mr. Powers explained that on the other side of the outline is the rough draft of the fair logo. Mr. Powers stated they wanted to stick with the basic shape of the Bedford Grown logo and that the committee should have a color logo ready by the end of the week.

Joy stated the committee has talked a lot about what to do with the profits made from the fair in the long term. The committee agreed that a part of it would go towards next year's fair, but eventually they hope to build enough cushion to create another form of scholarships for ag students in Bedford County.

Joy reported they are going to have Clover Bud and Little Showman classes for kids under 9. People have asked to see a sheep class and a calf class, but they will be discussing rules for that in the next meeting.

Mr. Palmer reported that he met on the 27<sup>th</sup> at Curry's and that he said he had a bean patch he was willing to let them plow with horse plowing. Ms. Nichols will also be bringing teams over to show logging. The BEA is helping to put together a parade of breeds and mules. Mr. Powers asked if Mr. Palmer had talked to Karen Baum about alpacas and llamas and Mr. Palmer stated he was working toward lining up some unique animals for Sunday. Mr. Palmer stated he has already lined up Kunekune pigs, which are an exotic breed from New Zealand.

Mr. Palmer stated he had a range of entertainment lined up for the weekend, and this past weekend learned about a local man named Danny Wilson who has a tribute band to Willie Nelson. Mr. Powers stated that any music costing more than \$150 needed to come before the committee for approval. Dr. Gardner stated a lot of fairs have kid events such as mutton busting, where kids ride on the back of sheep, and a greasy pig race. Dr. Gardner asked if there was a space there to have some of that type of children's activity. Mr. Powers said the only place enclosed would be where the livestock shows and equine events would take place.

Mr. Craig stated that the contract with Cole Amusement has been signed, the zoning use permit completed, and that we don't need insurance as it will fall under the county umbrella. The noise ordinance and entertainment permits don't apply to this event, and Mr. Craig will contact the health department upon request by the committee. Mr. Craig will be in charge of the wine trail and antique cars. Mr. Craig stated we are now members of the County Fair Association which will definitely help with promotion.

Farm Bureau has set up an account to run all the County Fair funds through. Mr. Johnson stated all checks should be made out to Bedford County Farm Bureau with Bedford County Fair written in memo line.

Mr. Powers stated we will be working with fire and rescue and the sheriff's department on this event. FFA and 4-H teams will be there to help with clean up and we are hoping to get the inmates to come in to clean after the fair is over. Church youth groups will be helping to park cars for donations and Bays will be bringing the port-a-pots.

In terms of power, the rides have their own generators and Curry stated he has other power sources as needed.

## **b. Marketing & Production**

### **(1) Farmers Markets**

Mr. Newman stated there have been no new developments on the greenhouse at Staunton River. The original team will need to regroup because they realized there needs to be a propane tank at a minimum of 12 feet away from the greenhouse, which means the greenhouse will need to be moved farther back to the corner of the lot. They plan to put in raised beds, a composting facility, and chickens in the future, making it more of an ag-based teaching area than just a greenhouse. They discussed getting a fence and lock to put around it as well as a separate holding place for the fertilizers.

Mr. Baker stated the Farmers Market Management team had their first Saturday Community Market in Bedford this past weekend and heard that it went very well.

### **(2) Elk Resolution**

Mr. Powers stated that the Board of Supervisors passed the Elk Resolution to fight legislation that is trying to eliminate hunting in 28 counties west of the three counties that have elk sanctuaries. Dr. Gardner explained that this is because elk have escaped into neighboring counties and were killed by deer hunters. If the elk wander out of their sanctuary during deer season, you can shoot them legally. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries want to take that away and create a new designated sanctuary in all counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Board supported this resolution unanimously, and it has been forwarded to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, our delegates, and the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry. Dr. Gardner stated you could go to the Game and Inland Fisheries website and leave a public comment. Dr. Gardner stated he would like to make a motion to write a letter to follow up with the resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The Ag Board voted unanimously for Dr. Gardner to draft a letter to send to the rest of the board for their edits.

## **c. Land Protection & Conservation**

Mr. Fellers reported nothing new to report, and that land trust issues have been tabled to discuss anti-pipeline issues. Mr. Feller's term is ending next month on the board. Dr. Gardner stated he sent an email to Mr. Fellers about the Virginia Agribusiness Council's Legislative Roundup and a section regarding monies that were dedicated to conservation. Dr. Gardner asked if this at all helped things.

Mr. Baker stated that for years the state has provided matching funds to localities that have purchased development rights. This relates to something the governor proposed to put toward land conservation and thought it had to do with easements. Dr. Gardner encouraged board members to become a member of the Virginia Agribusiness Council, which is a great organization that lobbies on par with Farm Bureau.

**(9) Other Business**

**(10) Informational Items**

Mr. Powers stated he talked to Dr. Schuch at the FFA banquet at Staunton River and thanked him for working to get a pay increase for teachers, and also discussed making improvements to the middle school ag curriculum.

Mr. Powers reminded the board that J.D. Scott's Strawberry Festival is scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup>.

**(11) Adjournment**

**8:13 p.m.**